

How Can I Help My Friends and Family Quit Smoking?



California
Smokers'
Helpline

1-800-NO-BUTTS

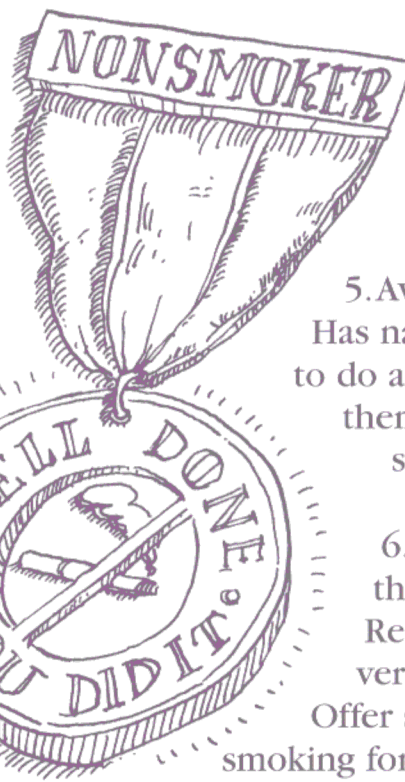
Is there a smoker in your life who you are hoping will quit? The first thing to remember is that you cannot **MAKE** someone quit. A smoker will only quit when he or she is ready. The best thing you **CAN** do is to be there to offer support.

HOW TO SUPPORT QUITTING:

1. Agree on some rules for where it's O.K. to smoke. It's best if no one smokes inside. With rules, smoking will take more effort, so the smokers in your life may decide to quit.

2. Let your smoker friends raise the topic of quitting. Try very hard not to jump right in with your opinion. Listen while they talk about quitting without judging what they say. Tell them you're there to help if they need you.

3. Allow for bad moods. Remind the person quitting that withdrawal is only temporary. Then change the subject: take them out to a movie, go window shopping, rent a video, watch a sunset, take care of the kids while they take a hot bath or shower to relax.



4. Help them change their routine. Maybe you could take a morning or evening walk together?

5. Avoid nagging at all costs. Has nagging ever made you want to do anything? It won't help them either. Ask how you can show your support.

6. Try to stay positive—even if they slip up and smoke. Remind yourself that this is a very difficult habit to break.

Offer support: "You've been smoking for __ years, most people have to quit a few times before they succeed. You'll do it."

7. Celebrate success. When the person quitting has been off cigarettes for 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, etc., plan something special. Perhaps a favorite restaurant, or a day of fun.

TIDBITS ABOUT QUITTING

- Relapse is common. For most people, it takes more than one try.
- The first two weeks are usually the hardest.
- Strong negative emotions, being around other smokers, and drinking alcohol are the three most common reasons that people go back to smoking.